

Open letter printed in The Independent newspaper 22/03/2010

Dear Sirs

In light of the string of recent revelations, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Extraordinary Rendition, Amnesty International UK, Human Rights Watch, Liberty and Reprieve have united to call on the UK Government to establish an independent inquiry into the UK's involvement in extraordinary rendition and the mistreatment of detainees abroad. The public should not have to rely on occasional speeches and lengthy judicial cases to discover the truth about such a serious issue.

We propose that such an inquiry should examine, amongst other issues, the use of UK territory and airspace, the involvement of the intelligence agencies and the involvement of the Armed Forces. The inquiry should be guided by the following statement of principles; it should:

1. be led by a judge or former judge. It should benefit from appropriate legal representation on the inquiry's panel. This is essential to give the inquiry independence and legitimacy;
2. be public, with as much evidence as possible heard in public. The government should disclose all relevant documents to the inquiry, and the head of the inquiry must have the power to then decide what should be made public;
3. aim to achieve maximum possible disclosure;
4. publish a report, making any necessary recommendations including on changes to law and / or policy;
5. Consider any other such matters as it considers appropriate and accept and consider written submissions from interested parties.

Signed,

All Party Parliamentary Group on Extraordinary Rendition;
Amnesty International UK;
Human Rights Watch;
Liberty;
Reprieve.